

Louisiana Begins to Rebuild

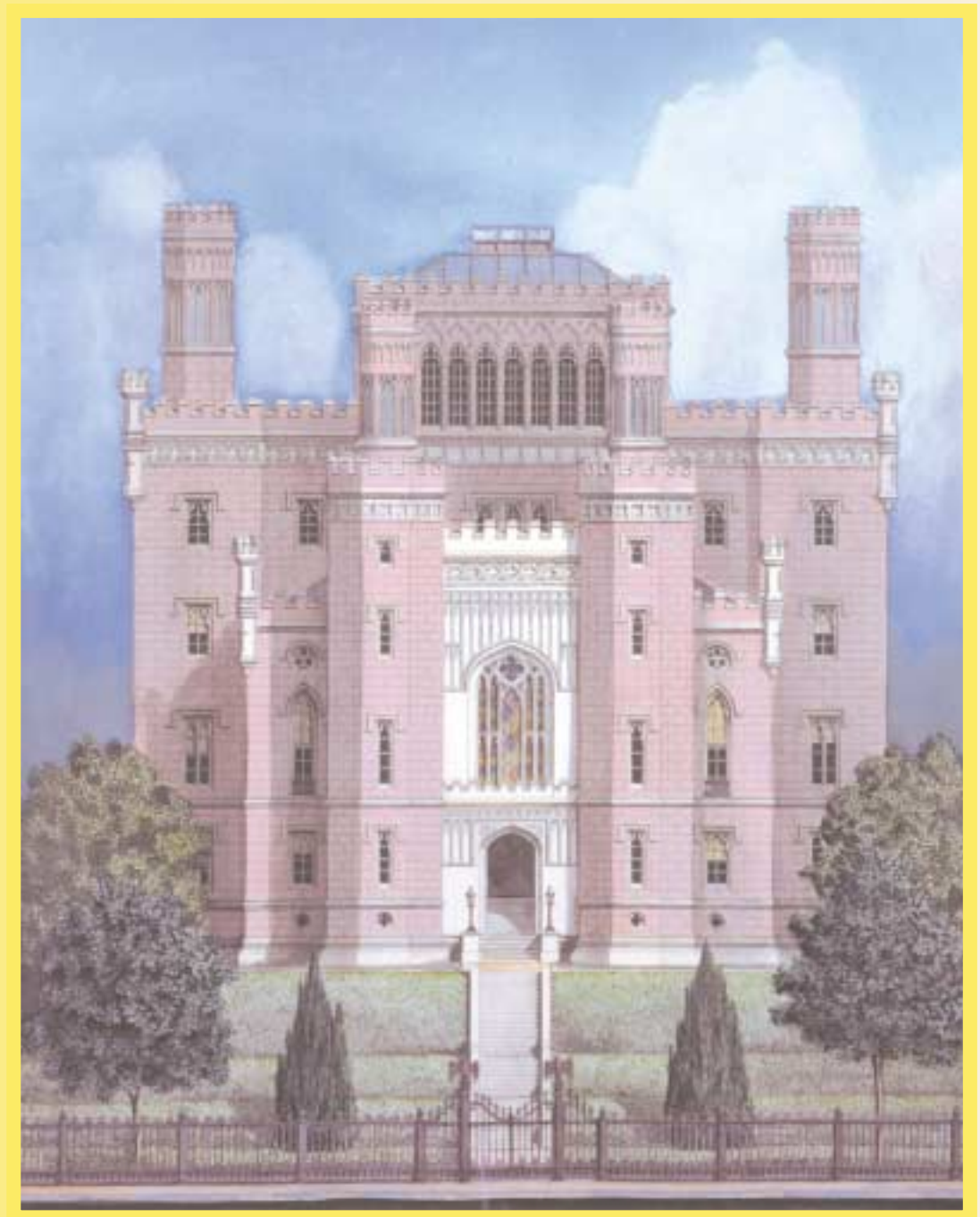
“The Capitol of Louisiana is the only one we believe that presents its face to the millions who annually travel on . . . the mighty Mississippi. We feel proud of it . . . and like the building because it is unique in style and unlike anything of the kind in the nation. A thousand years hence—(when the record will have been eaten up that might tell that this was once the Capitol), the antiquarian will map it down as the Castle of some mighty lord . . . in the nation.”

Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet, 11/2/1885

With the restoration of the **State House**, the Louisiana government found a permanent home in Baton Rouge. Political arguments continued, but none focused on relocating the capital. Over the next 46 years, the government gradually outgrew the building. More space was needed, but to expand the structure meant destroying its architectural integrity.

As primary advocate for a new state capitol, Huey Long worked tirelessly to convince the legislature of the need for a new building. A new state house, Long argued, would accommodate governmental needs and even save money by being efficient. He met with much opposition, but in September 1930, the legislature approved funding for the capitol. The government moved into the new building 13 months later.

The State House



Governors serving here were Samuel D. McEnery, Francis R. Tillou Nicholls, Murphy J. Foster, William W. Heard, Newton C. Blanchard, Jared Y. Sanders, Luther E. Hall, Ruffin G. Pleasant, John M. Parker, Henry L. Fuqua, Oramel H. Simpson, Huey P. Long, and Alvin O. King.

Is That a Fact?

- The Citizens of Baton Rouge offered to help defray the costs of renovating the capitol.
- In 1881, William A. Freret provided an estimate of \$200,000 to rebuild the building (although it appears to have cost over \$300,000 to restore).
- In 1994, after 12 years of work, the State House was finally restored at a cost of over \$9 million.
- After the government vacated the building, it served as offices for the Works Progress Administration (WPA), the Selective Service and the Louisiana Arts Commission.